

46. (New) A method comprising:  
providing a telephone apparatus having a handset, a handset-receiving portion and a hands-free audio interface;  
while the handset is received by the handset-receiving portion, communicating audio input and audio output of a telephone call via the hands-free audio interface; and  
in response to the handset being removed from the handset-receiving portion during the telephone call, muting the audio input and maintaining to communicate the audio output of the telephone call via the hands-free audio interface.

47. (New) The method of claim 44 further comprising:  
in response to the handset being replaced to the handset-receiving portion during the telephone call, unmuting the audio input to the telephone call via the hands-free audio interface.

48. (New) A telephone apparatus comprising:  
a handset;  
a handset-receiving portion;  
a sensor to sense if the handset is removed from the handset-receiving portion;  
a hands-free audio interface; and  
a telephone circuit responsive to the sensor to communicate audio input and audio output of a telephone call via the hands-free audio interface while the handset is received by the handset-receiving portion, and to mute the audio input and maintain communicating the audio output of the telephone call via the hands-free audio interface in response to the handset being removed from the handset-receiving portion during the telephone call.

49. (New) The telephone apparatus of claim 46 wherein the telephone circuit is to unmute the audio input to the telephone call via the hands-free audio interface in response to the handset being replaced to the handset-receiving portion during the telephone call.

50. (New) An article of manufacture comprising:  
a computer-readable storage medium; and  
computer-readable data stored by the computer-readable storage medium, the computer-readable data to direct a telephone apparatus having a handset, a handset-receiving portion and a hands-free audio interface to communicate audio input and audio output of a telephone call via the hands-free audio interface while the handset is received by the handset-receiving portion, and in response to the handset being removed from the handset-receiving portion during the telephone call, to mute the audio input and to maintain communicating the audio output of the telephone call via the hands-free audio interface.

51. (New) The article of manufacture of claim 48 wherein the computer-readable data is further to direct the telephone apparatus to unmute the audio input to the telephone call via the hands-free audio interface in response to the handset being replaced to the handset-receiving portion during the telephone call.

52. (New) A method comprising:  
providing a telephone apparatus having a handset, a handset-receiving portion and a hands-free audio interface;  
while the handset is removed from the handset-receiving portion, muting audio input and communicating audio output of a telephone call via the hands-free audio interface; and  
in response to the handset being replaced to the handset-receiving portion during the telephone call, unmuting the audio input and maintaining to communicate the audio output of the telephone call via the hands-free audio interface.

53. (New) A telephone apparatus comprising:  
a handset;  
a handset-receiving portion;  
a sensor to sense if the handset is received by the handset-receiving portion;  
a hands-free audio interface; and  
a telephone circuit responsive to the sensor to mute audio input and  
communicate audio output of a telephone call via the hands-free audio interface  
while the handset is removed from the handset-receiving portion, and to unmute the  
audio input and maintain communicating the audio output of the telephone call via  
the hands-free audio interface in response to the handset being replaced to the  
handset-receiving portion during the telephone call.

54. (New) An article of manufacture comprising:  
a computer-readable storage medium; and  
computer-readable data stored by the computer-readable storage medium,  
the computer-readable data to direct a telephone apparatus having a handset, a  
handset-receiving portion and a hands-free audio interface to mute audio input and  
communicate audio output of a telephone call via the hands-free audio interface  
while the handset is removed from the handset-receiving portion, and to unmute the  
audio input and to maintain communicating the audio output of the telephone call  
via the hands-free audio interface in response to the handset being replaced to the  
handset-receiving portion during the telephone call.

55. (New) A method comprising:  
providing a telephone apparatus having a hook switch and a hands-free audio  
interface;  
while the hook switch is depressed, communicating audio input and audio  
output of a telephone call via the hands-free audio interface; and  
in response to the hook switch being released, muting the audio input and  
maintaining to communicate the audio output of the telephone call via the hands-  
free audio interface.

56. (New) The method of claim 53 further comprising:  
subsequent to the hook switch being released, unmuting the audio input to the telephone call via the hands-free audio interface in response to the hook switch being depressed.

57. (New) A telephone apparatus comprising:  
a hook switch;  
a hands-free audio interface; and  
a telephone circuit responsive to the hook switch to communicate audio input and audio output of a telephone call via the hands-free audio interface while the hook switch is depressed, and to mute the audio input and maintain communicating the audio output of the telephone call via the hands-free audio interface in response to the hook switch being released.

58. (New) The telephone apparatus of claim 55 wherein, subsequent to the hook switch being released, the telephone circuit is to unmute the audio input to the telephone call via the hands-free audio interface in response to the hook switch being depressed.

59. (New) An article of manufacture comprising:  
a computer-readable storage medium; and  
computer-readable data stored by the computer-readable storage medium, the computer-readable data to direct a telephone apparatus having a hook switch and a hands-free audio interface to communicate audio input and audio output of a telephone call via the hands-free audio interface while the hook switch is depressed, and in response to the hook switch being released, to mute the audio input and to maintain communicating the audio output of the telephone call via the hands-free audio interface.

60. (New) The article of manufacture of claim 57 wherein the computer-readable data is further to direct the telephone apparatus to unmute the audio input to the telephone call via the hands-free audio interface in response to the hook switch being depressed subsequent to the hook switch being released.

61. (New) A method comprising:  
providing a telephone apparatus having a hook switch and a hands-free audio interface;

while the hook switch is released, muting audio input and communicating audio output of a telephone call via the hands-free audio interface; and

in response to the hook switch being depressed during the telephone call, unmuting the audio input and maintaining to communicate the audio output of the telephone call via the hands-free audio interface.

62. (New) A telephone apparatus comprising:  
a hook switch;  
a hands-free audio interface; and  
a telephone circuit responsive to the hook switch to mute audio input and communicate audio output of a telephone call via the hands-free audio interface while the hook switch is released, and to unmute the audio input and maintain communicating the audio output of the telephone call via the hands-free audio interface in response to the hook switch being depressed.

63. (New) An article of manufacture comprising:  
a computer-readable storage medium; and  
computer-readable data stored by the computer-readable storage medium, the computer-readable data to direct a telephone apparatus having a hook switch and a hands-free audio interface to mute audio input and communicate audio output of a telephone call via the hands-free audio interface while the hook switch is released, and to unmute the audio input and to maintain communicating the audio output of the telephone call via the hands-free audio interface in response to the hook switch being depressed.